

CONSTRAINTS ON L, N - SUBSTITUTION IN DOABI¹

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The speech of the community residing between the rivers of Sutlej and Beas, with three main cities Jalandhar, Kapurthala and Hoshiarpur is referred as Doabi dialect. The author in this paper discusses about the social constraints on L, N. Substitution and subsequently its influence upon vowel heightening.

The Doabi dialect here refers to the speech of the community residing between the rivers of Sutlej and Beas, with three main cities Jalandhar, Kapurthala and Hoshiarpur. Traditionally, it is known as Jalandhar Doab. The peculiar linguistic feature that distinguishes it from rest of the Panjabi dialects is the alternative use of /b/ and /v/. The paper in hand primarily concentrates on the social constraints on L, N-substitution and subsequently its influence upon vowel heightening. ɔ → 0/-l, n/.

METHODOLOGY :

The sample consists of twenty seven subjects which were selected from three adjoining localities using the systematic sampling techniques. These localities are : Rampur, a rural hamlet of Kapurthala district; Kala Sanghian, a semi-urbanized town of Kapurthala district; and New Jawahar Nagar, a model town colony of Jalandhar city. These subjects were further classified based on sex and age.

A questionnaire was prepared to elicit social as well as linguistic information. Though much reliance was placed on free and casual setting data presented here are entirely based on recorded responses, besides personal observations. The style A of this study is a conversational style and remaining two styles of Reading, Passage and word-list are treated here as style B and style C respectively.

1. L, N-substitution denotes the process wherein retroflex lateral and nasal L, N/ are being substituted by their alveolar counterparts i.e., /l,n/.

The L, N-substitution has been observed by linguists from two different perspectives i.e., Areal and Social. Grierson (1916), Jain (1934), Arun (1961), Gill and Gleason (1963) are some of the scholars who have given the areal distribution of L, N-substitution.

Grierson (1916 : 609) has postulated that the Cerebral L is never sounded in Amritsar (Majhi dialect). The ordinary dental l is always substituted for it. But Gill and Gleason (1963 : 10) have contradicted this observation saying that the standard Majhi Panjabi has a retroflex lateral /L/ in strong contrast with dental /l/. In some other dialects, however, this contrast does not exist. Jain (1934) and Arun (1961) have also shared the latter view.

Linguists who have looked at the social distribution of L, N-substitution are of the view that urban speech patterns are more prone to L, N-substitution than the rural one (Joshi, 1971; Singh et al, 1973; and Sandhu, 1981).

According to Sandhu (1981 : 7) the business community living in cities, generally replaces the L and N with l and n whereas the business community settled in rural areas retain the L and N. Joshi (1971) too has the same opinion.. According to him the tendency to use l, n varieties of the segments is much more amongst the urban women because they think that the use of L and N is a sign of non-literacy or perhaps unpolished speech.

In the following sections L, N substitution among rural, semi urban and urban groups belonging to different sub groups in terms of age and sex is discussed and shown through tables.

Age - group	STYLE					
	A		B		C	
	(N)	(L)	(N)	(L)	(N)	(L)
U - I	97.73 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %
SU - I	46.80 %	87.50 %	41.52 %	41.37 %	42.85 %	50 %
R - II	00.00 %	00.00 %	3.03 %	3.07 %	2.81 %	9.52 %
U - II	34.37 %	42.30 %	30.64 %	64.06 %	25.35 %	69.76 %
SU - II	9.30 %	31.25 %	60.25 %	62.50 %	15.55 %	57.69 %
R - II	00.00 %	00.00 %	1.05 %	16.27 %	2.12 %	64.28 %
U - III	00.00 %	00.00 %	8.52 %	34.28 %	11.26 %	48.78 %
SU - III	00.00 %	00.00 %	—	—	—	—
R - III	00.00 %	00.00 %	—	—	—	—

Table I L, N-substitution indices by style, Age-group, Inhabitancy.

U = Urban	I = age group 15 — 30
SU = Semi - urban	II = age group 31 — 55
R = Rural	III = age group 56 +

SEX - GROUP	STYLE					
	A		B		C	
	(N)	(L)	(N)	(L)	(N)	(L)
UF	69.64 %	50 %	59.53 %	84.09 %	53.12 %	89.28 %
SUF	37.70 %	71.92 %	66.95 %	78.83 %	52.25 %	79.54 %
RF	00.00 %	00.00 %	—	—	—	—
UM	29.11 %	45.28 %	36.49 %	50.89 %	39.83 %	60 %
SUM	3 %	4.34 %	23.45 %	14.63 %	4.16 %	7.69 %
RM	00.00 %	00.00 %	—	—	—	—

Table II L, N-substitution indices by style, Sex-group, Inhabitancy.

UF = Urban females
 UM = Urban males
 SUF = Semi - urban females
 SUM = Semi - urban males
 RM = Rural males
 RF = Rural females

SOCIAL CONSTRAINTS ON L, N-SUBSTITUTION :

Following Chambers and Trudgill (1980), the constraints can be classified into STRONG and WEAK constraints. The strong constraints allow the application of a particular linguistic variable at a higher frequency whereas the weak at a lower. In this paper, the only social constraints viz. age, sex, and inhabitancy will be analysed as there is no potential linguistic environment which could be proved as a significant context for the application of this variable.

If we look at the Tables I and II, we can arrive at the conclusion that all levels, variability emerges on three distinct patterns of speech with respect to L, N-substitution. These are, rural, semi - urban, and urban. The urban, semi - urban, and rural groups belonging to different sub-groups, in terms of age and sex present a marked contrast in relation to L, N-substitution. The urban age groups I, II show a qualitative difference when compared to their respective rural counterparts. That is, we find that the urban age group I shows 100% use of the l, n varieties. Whereas rural age group I does not permit any substitution and uses L, N segments. The position of the semi-urban age group I lies somewhere in the middle but moving from the rural relative to the urban one. This further confirms our generalization and L, N-substitution. The rural group being completely non-urbanized does not show any instance of L, N-substitution, particularly in the case of style A. The semi-urban group is at the middle of the scale. The urban group I has completely shifted towards the l, n varieties of the segments under consideration. Similar correlations can be established in the 'rural' and 'urban' areas in terms of sex also.

Coming to the question of the origin of L, N-substitution in terms of age, it seems that the process of L, N-substitution might have started with the second generation (see table III).

Table III L, N-substitution in different age-groups
(Style - A)

	III	II	I
U	●	● ∞ 0	0
SU	●	● ∞ (0)	● ∞ 0
R	●	●	●

● = Use of L, N varieties

0 = Use of I, n varieties

i) the urban age group III i.e., the old generation shows no presence of L, N-substitution in their casual speech (Style A) regardless of the rural-urban parameters ;

ii) the urban age groups I, i.e. younger generation shows no fluctuation in their speech, that is, they always substitute L, N with I, n. That proves that the respective change is completed in their case. And it is an established fact that any linguistic change can not reach its completion within one generation;

iii) this leads us to conclude that it is the age group II which has perhaps initiated this change because the speaker belonging to this generation show some fluctuation in their use of the two varieties i.e., retroflexed and non-retroflexed one.

As we have said earlier that the L, N-substitution is a feature of urban speech pattern, we can relate it to above conclusion and say that L, N-substitution has emerged with the second generation of urban speakers of the language, here in Doabi dialect. This is substituted by the following factors.

i) the urban areas are strong centres for linguistic interference and we know that the process of L, N-substitution may be a consequence of the influence of Hindi (cf. Arun, 1961); and

ii) the direct influence of Hindi on Panjabi being markedly increased after independence with Hindi gaining more prestige and opportunities due to obvious reasons.

L, N-SUBSTITUTION AND VOWEL HEIGHTENING :

Two phonological processes are taking place simultaneously. These are, L, N-substitution and vowel heightening. The applicability of Rule II (vowel heightening) is proportionately determined by the application of Rule I (L, N-substitution).

Rule I L, N → l, n

Rule II ɔ → 0/-n,-l/

A glance at Rule I and Rule II leads us to conclude that Rule I is a gross-feeder of Rule II, i. e. the output of Rule I becomes the input of Rule II. It can be hypothesized that if Rule I applies in Panjabi Phonology, here Doabi, then the application of Rule II becomes inevitable (especially where the low back vowel is followed by a nasal) as the output of Rule I is not acceptable to Panjabi Phonology.

For example :

ʃɔɔNi 'autumn harvest' ʃɔɔni★

PɔɔN 'breeze' pɔɔn★

tɔ'ɔLa 'grey hair' tɔ'ɔla

In the process of lexical formation in Panjabi, the number of occurrences of ɔ followed by l, n is almost negligible. There is not a single entry of ɔ followed by /n/ in panjabi English dictionary (see Table IV) whereas in the case of /l/ the number is sixteen. So in the context where the low back vowel is followed by a alveolar lateral, comparatively, the degree of vowel heightening is low.

TABLE IV

0 + l	0 + L	0 + n	0 + N
62	24	9	182
ɔ + l	ɔ + L	ɔ + n	ɔ + N
16	43	0	803

(based on the Panjabi-English dictionary (1985) edited by Gurcharan Singh et al).

CONCLUSIONS :

From the above discussion, it can be hypothesized that

i) the L, N-substitution has started with the second generation of urban speakers;

ii) urban age group I seems to be the strongest vehicle of L, N-substitution;

iii) L, N-substitutions is a consequence of the influence of Hindi (cf. Arun, 1961); and

iv) L, N-substitution and vowel heightening are two simultaneous phonological processes where the latter is fed by the former.

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